

Slavery in the United States
History 243, Spring 2001

Russell Wigginton

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Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:45-11:15; by appointment

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Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to attain a fundamental knowledge of one of the most complex and controversial experiences in American history. In an effort to better understand this institution, this course will examine various social, economic, and political aspects of slavery, and attempt to explain why the system developed as it did. Also, because slavery remained in the United States over such a long period (approximately two hundred and forty years), we will discuss how it changed over time.

Readings:

Blassingame, John, The Slave Community

Breen, T.H., & Innes, Stephen, "Myne Owne Ground"

Mintz, Steven, ed., African American Voices: The Life Cycle of Slavery

Tannenbaum, Frank, Slave and Citizen

White, Deborah Gray, Ar'n't I a Woman?

Wood, Peter, Black Majority

Grading:

Grades will be determined from the following course requirements:

1. **45%** - Three (15% each) 4-5 page "reaction" papers. Throughout the semester, students will write essays in response to questions that arise from the readings, lectures, and discussions. Note: Be sure to use a "normal" size font. If you have any questions about the font you plan to use, please ask before turning in the paper.
2. **20%** - Exam I. A mid-semester examination that will consist of a few short answers as well as a more lengthy essay. Students will be expected to incorporate the readings, lectures, and discussions.
3. **20%** - Exam II. A Final examination that will cover material from the entire semester. This exam will be a longer version of the mid-semester examination.
4. **15%** - Participation/Attendance. While the structure of the course will be primarily lecture, the discussion of issues raised will be crucial to the success of the class. Therefore, students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the major themes from the readings. Also, although I will not necessarily call roll each day, students who do not attend class regularly will lose points for their final grade.

***Late Policy** - There will be no extensions given on any written assignments without a letter grade per day penalty (this includes papers handed in on the same day but after the designated time). The only exceptions will be those that the College deems as “acceptable” in the Student Handbook. Students should also note that having other exams and papers due on the same day will not be considered a valid excuse.

Class Assignments:

Iberian and Mediterranean influences/Atlantic Slave Trade

- 1/11 Introduction
- 1/16 Tannenbaum, Introduction, pgs. 3-38; Mintz, Introduction.
- 1/18 Tannenbaum, pgs. 39-61; Mintz, pgs. 29-34.
- 1/23 Tannenbaum, pgs. 62-128.
- 1/25 Mintz, pgs. 35-68.

Colonial Slavery

- 1/30 Chesapeake: Breen and Innes, pgs. 3-67.
- 2/01 Breen and Innes, pgs. 68-114.
- 2/06 **Paper #1 Due (15%);*Film***
- 2/08 South Carolina: Wood, pgs. 13-34.
- 2/13 Wood, pgs. 35-94.
- 2/15 Wood, pgs. 95-130.
- 2/20 Wood, pgs. 131-217.
- 2/22 Wood, pgs. 218-270.
- 2/27 Wood, pgs. 271-326.
- 3/01 **Exam I (20%)**

Antebellum Slavery

- 3/13 Blassingame, pgs. 3-48.
- 3/15 Blassingame, pgs. 49-104.
- 3/20 Blassingame, pgs. 105-148; Mintz, pgs. 69-84, 105-116.
- 3/22 Blassingame, pgs. 149-191; Mintz, pgs. 95-104.
- 3/27 Blassingame, pgs. 192-248; Mintz, pgs. 127-156.
- 3/29 Blassingame, pgs. 249-283; Mintz, pgs. 117-126.
- 4/03 Blassingame, pgs. 284-322; Mintz
- 4/05 **Paper #2 Due (15%); *Film***

Non-Traditional Slavery/Women in Slavery

- 4/10 White, Introduction, pgs. 27-61.
- 4/17 White, pgs. 62-118.
- 4/19 White, pgs. 119-168.
- 4/24 Catch-up; no reading
- 4/26 **Paper #3 Due (15%); Review**
- 5/01 Final Exam (20%); 1:00-3:30**